

# GOLDEN GAZETTE

A Monthly Newspaper for Senior Adults in the Fairfax Area

JANUARY 2005

*Serving Seniors for 28 Years*

VOL. 28, NO. 9

## Rebuilding Together—Free Home Repairs

If your home needs rehabilitation or repair, and you find it difficult to pay for these services, RPJ Housing may be able to help you.

For almost 20 years, RPJ Housing has provided free home repair services to low-income homeowners through its Rebuilding Together program (formerly known as Christmas & Sukkot in April). Since 1988, over 45,000 community members have repaired 1,300 homes and nonprofit facilities in Arlington and Fairfax.

All the work is done for free by teams of volunteers with skills ranging from novice to professional. You may have seen the thousands of community members armed with paintbrushes, hammers, and great big smiles during the last weekend in April. They repair floors, ceilings, walls, doors and roofs; install grab bars, railings and smoke detectors; address minor plumbing and electrical repairs; build ramps, paint, and attend to yard work.

To qualify for the program, residents of Arlington and Fairfax counties and the cities of Falls Church and Fairfax must own and live in the



**Rebuilding Together Volunteers Hard at Work**

home to be repaired. The income for an individual cannot exceed \$30,450. For each additional person in the home, the income level increases by increments of \$3,000-\$4,000. Priority is given to seniors and persons with disabilities. To receive an application, please call **703-528-5606**, Ext.10, or visit the Web site at [www.rpjhousing.org](http://www.rpjhousing.org). Applications must be received by February 1, 2005.

This is an abridged version with links to senior centers and county tours. Policy prohibits publishing the ads that are included in the print version.

If you would like to receive the print version on a monthly basis, please e-mail [kathy.wilson@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:kathy.wilson@fairfaxcounty.gov). Large-print and recorded formats also are available. It's free!

We welcome your comments. Please see page 2 for additional contact information.

### January COA Meeting at Different Location

The January Fairfax Area Commission on Aging meeting will be held on January 19, at the Pennino Building, 12011 Government Center Parkway, Room 709, Fairfax. *See page 2 for details.*

## GOLDEN GAZETTE

Published by the

Department of Family Services

FAIRFAX AREA AGENCY ON AGING

12011 Government Center Parkway

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Fairfax, VA 22035-1104

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TTY: 703-449-1186

FAX: 703-449-8689

AAA Web Site: [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/service/aaa](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/service/aaa)

The *Golden Gazette* is a free, monthly newspaper dedicated to serving persons age 60 and over in Fairfax County and the cities of Fairfax and Falls Church.

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## ADDRESS ADDITIONS/CORRECTIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Although the *Golden Gazette* accepts limited paid advertisements, reader contributions are critical to ensure continuation of the publication. We are very grateful to all of you who do send contributions, regardless of the amount (the average contribution is about \$7.00). ***Please note that contributions are entirely voluntary.***

If you have an address change, are receiving duplicates, or if you would like to make a contribution, please complete the form below and mail to: ***Golden Gazette, Area Agency on Aging, 12011 Government Center Parkway, Suite 708, Fairfax, VA 22035-1104.*** Checks should be made payable to **Fairfax County**. Please list your current address below or attach your mailing label and check the appropriate lines. If you prefer to call about address changes, the number is **703-324-5633**.

\_\_\_\_ Contribution check attached.  
\_\_\_\_ I am NOT currently on your mailing list. Please add my name and address.  
\_\_\_\_ I am already on your mailing list.  
\_\_\_\_ I am moving. My new address in the Fairfax area will be:  
NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
CURRENT ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
NEW ADDRESS (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
TELEPHONE (in case we have a question) \_\_\_\_\_

**Publication of advertising contained herein does not constitute endorsement.**



To comply with the Americans With Disabilities Act, the *Golden Gazette* is available in large-print and recorded formats. Call **703-324-5633** to request an alternative format.

The names and addresses of persons receiving the *Golden Gazette* are subject to disclosure pursuant to the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, VA Code Sec. 2.1-340 thru 346.1. Inquiries or complaints concerning this policy should be directed to the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging, 12011 Government Center Parkway, #708, Fairfax, VA 22035-1104.

The Fairfax Area Agency on Aging contracts with Southern Maryland Printing in Waldorf, MD, for printing and mailing services.

### Location Change for Commission on Aging Meeting

The Fairfax Area Commission on Aging (COA) will meet on **January 19, at 1:00 p.m.**, at the Pennino Building, 12011 Government Center Parkway, Room 709, Fairfax. **(This is a change of location for the January meeting only.)** A public comment period is held at the beginning of each meeting. (Note: The COA meets on the third Wednesday of each month, **except August.**)

Call **703-324-7746** for information or to be placed on the mailing list. If you need a sign language interpreter or any special accommodation or auxiliary aid, please call the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging at **703-324-5411** (voice) or **703-449-1186** (TTY) at least five working days in advance of the meeting. There is no charge for these services.

## DEADLINES

***ALWAYS the first of the month a month in advance (for ads, ad payments, and announcements)***

### Issue

February

March

April

### Due Date

January 1

February 1

March 1

# "The Shakes": Essential Tremor in Seniors

*by Granger Benson, M.D.*

We all feel tremulous or shaky once in a while, whether due to fear, anxiety, too much caffeine or some other cause. That quivering we experience in our hands or voice is called a tremor. When it happens in an excitable situation, we recognize it as a normal reaction that is harmless and short-lived.

However, for 5-10 million Americans, including roughly 10% of seniors, tremor is a daily fact of life that may be annoying or even disabling. These are people who suffer from a problem known as essential tremor. Except for stroke, it is the most common neurological condition in the older population. Anyone who has seen a Katherine Hepburn movie has seen significant tremor, because she had conspicuous manifestations of this disorder.

## **What Is Essential Tremor?**

At least twenty medical disorders are characterized by a tremor, although many of them are relatively rare. Several key features distinguish essential tremor from other causes. Essential tremor usually involves the hands symmetrically, but can also extend to the head, the voice, the trunk or even the legs. It is most evident when the limb is extended against gravity ("postural tremor") or in the act of deliberate movement ("intention tremor"). Interestingly, even small amounts of alcohol will markedly reduce the tremor for a period of time. During sleep, the tremor is usually not evident at all.

People with this disorder have difficulty with actions that require fine muscle movements. Holding or manipulating small objects or tools may be difficult. Affected individuals may face challenges performing everyday tasks like eating, holding a cup of tea, sewing, shaving or writing longhand. The psychosocial effects can be embarrassing and debilitating, causing people to withdraw from social interactions and activities.

Essential tremor affects males and females in approximately equal numbers. Typically the onset is in one's 40s or 50s, but the frequency increases with age. In over half of cases the disorder appears to be inherited and is therefore

called familial essential tremor. Children of an affected parent have a 50% chance of inheriting a gene for the disorder. By age 65 or 70, nearly all of them will show signs of tremor. In cases where no family history exists, the cause of the tremor is not known.

## **Is It Related to Parkinson's Disease?**

Many people with essential tremor worry about Parkinson's disease. However, Parkinson's disease is a completely unrelated disorder with quite different features. To begin with, Parkinson's sufferers exhibit a slower type of tremor that has been described as "pill-rolling" in appearance when it affects the hand. The Parkinson's tremor is more evident at rest and tends to diminish with activity. For example, it will go away during eating, whereas with essential tremor, the opposite occurs. The head and voice are almost never affected in Parkinson's disease. In addition, a history of other affected family members is rarely seen.

Moreover, Parkinson's disease sufferers exhibit a peculiar paradox that essential tremor patients do not. That is, they simultaneously experience bothersome involuntary tremor (too much movement) *and* impaired ability to initiate voluntary activity (too little movement). The latter problem, called bradykinesia, accounts for the slow, shuffling gait and lack of facial expression so common in the disease. Parkinson's patients also exhibit small, laborious handwriting called micrographia, and a characteristic stiffness of the limbs known as cogwheel rigidity. These features are not present in essential tremor.

## **How Is It Treated?**

Essential tremor is a chronic, usually progressive condition with no cure. However, many medications are available that can achieve at least partial improvement if taken continuously. One of the most common is a class of drugs called beta blockers that is usually used for heart disease and hypertension. Examples include propranolol (Inderal), atenolol (Tenormin) and

*Cont. p. 4*

### ***Essential Tremor Cont. From p. 3***

metoprolol (Toprol-XL, Lopressor). Beta blockers sometimes cause side effects like dizziness, depression and fatigue.

Another common treatment is a drug called primidone (Mysoline), which is primarily used to treat seizures. Although serious side effects are not common, mild side effects are frequent. In addition, some patients experience nausea, vomiting, sedation, dizziness and flu-like symptoms at the onset of treatment, which go away after one to four days. Primidone is started at a low dose and often has to be adjusted upward many times before optimal results are obtained.

Numerous other medications have been tried with variable success, either alone or in combination. Some doctors even suggest small “doses” of alcohol, but the pitfalls of this approach should be evident. The good news is that for many people, essential tremor is a nuisance problem that does not warrant medications. Skipping caffeine and other stimulants, getting plenty of rest and avoiding provocative situations (like ordering soup at a formal dinner!) may be all that is needed.

Ultimately the least disruptive strategy for many people may be to just live with the problem and count their other blessings. After all, it hardly seemed to hurt Katherine Hepburn’s career!

*Source: Dr. Benson is an internal medicine physician and president of Ready Hands Home Care, a Fairfax County company that provides companion care, personal assistance and other services to help seniors remain safely independent at home.*

#### **HEALTH INSURANCE QUESTIONS?**

Call the Virginia Insurance Counseling & Assistance Program (VICAP) at  
**703-324-5851.**

## **Rx Outreach Program**

Rx Outreach is a new patient assistance program (PAP) that offers low-cost generic prescription drugs to uninsured individuals and families, as well as those who have limited prescription drug coverage.

Rx Outreach, administered by Express Scripts, Inc., is currently the only PAP program to offer generic drugs. This program offers more than 50 FDA approved generic medicines for a variety of health conditions including, but not limited to, diabetes, depression, heart conditions, high blood pressure, and asthma. Licensed pharmacists fill all prescriptions, and specially trained call center personnel are available from 9:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., Monday-Friday, to assist patients with questions.

Individuals and families of any age, regardless of other health coverage, who are at 250% of the federal poverty income level—individuals who earn \$23,275 a year or less and couples earning \$31,225 a year or less—are eligible. For families, add \$7,950 for each additional person. The program does not require tax returns or other proof of income.

If you are eligible, you will be able to obtain your generic medications for \$18 for a 3-month supply or \$30 for a 6-month supply. Prescriptions are shipped directly to the patient’s home, or to any other location, within 10-14 days. Of course, you must obtain a valid prescription from a physician to take advantage of this program.

For more information about this program or to obtain an application, call the toll-free number at **1-800-769-3880** or visit the Web site at [www.rxoutreach.com](http://www.rxoutreach.com).

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## **Adventures in Learning Open House—January 13**

The Shepherd’s Center of Oakton will hold its Open House and registration for the winter session of Adventures in Learning on January 13, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. The \$30 registration fee covers four classes each Thursday from January 20-March 10. Classes include: T’ai Chi, Bridge, World Affairs, Art With Tanya, Literary Potpourri, a health series, and hobby and craft time. Computer classes are an additional \$10. Seventh Day Adventist Church, 344 Courthouse Road, Vienna. Call **703-281-0538** for more information.



# AARP Tax-Aide Program

FEBRUARY 1-APRIL 15

January is when many people begin thinking about preparing their tax returns. AARP Tax-Aide is the nation's largest free, volunteer-run tax preparation service available to taxpayers age 60 and older with middle- and low-income. AARP Tax-Aide is administered by the AARP Foundation in cooperation with the IRS. All tax preparation volunteers receive training in tax law and must pass an IRS certification examination. Last year, over 4,500 individuals and families benefited from this service.

This year there will be nine tax preparation sites in Northern Virginia. Three of these sites will be open six days per week. Several will have evening and/or Saturday hours.

The majority of the sites operate on a walk-in basis, with appointments being required at some Senior Centers. For more information, call **1-888-227-7669** (AARP NOW) or visit the Web site at [www.aarp.org/taxaide](http://www.aarp.org/taxaide). The sites and the hours of operation are shown below:

## **Extended Operation Site/Walk-In Clients**

### **Mason District Government Center**

6507 Columbia Pike, Annandale

Mon.-Fri., 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Mon. & Thur., 5:00-8:00 p.m.

Sat., 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

### **Sherwood Regional Library**

2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria

Mon.-Fri., 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Tue. & Thur., 5:00-8:00 p.m.

Sat., 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

### **SunTrust Bank of Vienna**

515 Maple Ave., Vienna

Mon.-Fri., 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Tue. & Thur., 5:00-8:00 p.m.

Sat., 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

## **Part-Time Sites**

### **Centreville Regional Library**

14200 St. Germaine Dr., Centreville

Tue. & Sat., 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Walk-In Clients

### **Culpeper Garden Senior Center**

4435 N. Pershing Drive, Arlington

Tue. and Fri., 9:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Appointment Required

Call Ms. Vick, 703-228-4403

### **Falcon's Landing Senior Residence**

20225 Falcons Landing Circle, Sterling

Thur., 2:00-5:00 p.m.

Sat., 1:30-4:30 p.m.

Appointment Required

Call Ennis Whitehead, 703-404-5143

### **Manassas Senior Center**

9320 Mosby St., Manassas

Mon. & Fri., 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Appointment Required

Call 703-792-6405

### **Reston Community Center**

2310 Colts Neck Rd., Reston

Tue. & Sat., 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Thur., 6:00-9:00 p.m.

Walk-In Clients

### **Woodbridge Senior Center**

2450 Longview Dr., Woodbridge

Wed. and Thur., 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Appointment Required

Call 703-494-5136

**Note: The Worksheet for Federal Tax Form 1040 is available in large print by calling 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676).**

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

One of the best ways to spend your time is to volunteer. Everyone benefits from volunteering. The agencies receive the help they need, and the volunteers receive satisfaction from helping others.

**Facets** is a nonprofit organization serving homeless and low-income people in Fairfax County. Volunteers are needed to provide transportation, office work, special events planning, marketing, grant writing, and adult and youth mentoring. One-time and long-term opportunities are available. Call Dave Fernandez at **703-352-3268** or visit their website at [www.facetscares.org](http://www.facetscares.org).

The **Fairfax County Public Library** needs volunteers to be English-conversation group leaders and one-on-one conversation coaches. Hours are flexible, and volunteers are needed at all branches. Call Kate Wanderer at **703-324-8332**.

**Inova VNA Home Health** needs volunteers to be Friendly Visitors to lonely, homebound patients, and to work as office assistants in their Springfield office. Call Marion Hart or Adele Jenney at **703-916-2885**.

The **Meals on Wheels** program needs a driver coordinator for the Fairfax area and volunteers to deliver meals in the Clifton, Centreville, and Chantilly areas. Drivers deliver meals once a month on weekdays from 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Call the Volunteer Intake Line at **703-324-5406**.

The **Volunteer Home Services for Seniors** program needs volunteers in the Route 1 area to provide transportation for seniors. In the Falls Church area, volunteers are needed for a variety of jobs, including grocery shopping, light housework, yard work, and providing transportation. Call the Volunteer Intake Line at **703-324-5406**.

To have a volunteer opportunity considered for this column, e-mail or fax your submission to **Retha Lockhart** by the first of the month one month in advance.

**E-mail:** [retha.lockhart@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:retha.lockhart@fairfaxcounty.gov)

**Fax:** 703-449-8689

**Phone:** 703-324-5407

### Adult Foster Care Program Needs Providers

The Department of Family Services, Adult and Aging Division, is recruiting providers for its Adult Foster Care Program. Local adult foster care homes are approved by the Department of Family Services based on standards established by the State Board of Social Services. Providers are adults who have space in their homes and are willing to give a little extra time and support to a person with a physical or mental health condition. Some services that are provided to clients include help with meal preparation, personal care, and money management. Many clients have day programs. Each client has a case manager who provides support and training to providers.

There is reimbursement for the Adult Foster Care provider. This can be a very rewarding experience for both clients and providers.

If you have any questions or have an interest in providing this valuable service to the community, please call Angela Brown, Social Worker, Department of Family Services, at **703-324-7401**.

### VOLUNTEER POSITION AVAILABLE

Here's a chance to contribute your administrative skills to a good cause! The Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, which advocates for people living in nursing and assisted living facilities, needs volunteer help with data entry, list maintenance, and clerical tasks. Knowledge of MS Word and Excel, strong English skills. Time commitment: 5 hours/week in Fairfax. Please call **703-324-5435**.



# Welcome-to-Medicare Physical

Under the Medicare Modernization Act of 2003, beginning January 1, 2005, all new Medicare Part B beneficiaries—both those under age 65 and those age 65 and older—will be able to receive a “Welcome to Medicare Physical,” or an initial preventive physical examination, within 6 months of enrollment in Medicare Part B. The physical must be performed no later than 6 months after the date coverage under Part B first begins to be covered by Medicare, and it must be performed by a physician, physician assistant, nurse practitioner, or clinical nurse specialist.

## **What services are included in the exam?**

The initial physical exam includes measurement of height, weight, and blood pressure and an electrocardiogram for early disease detection. The exam also includes education, counseling, and referral for other screening and preventive services that Medicare already covers. These services include:

- Pneumococcal, influenza, and Hepatitis B vaccines
- Mammogram screening
- Screening pap test and pelvic exam with a clinical breast exam
- Prostate cancer screening test
- Colorectal cancer screening test
- Diabetes outpatient self-management training services
- Bone mass measurement
- Glaucoma screening
- Depression screening
- Functional assessment that includes the risk of falling
- Medical nutrition therapy services for individuals with diabetes or renal disease
- Cardiovascular screening blood tests
- Diabetes screening tests for those at “high-risk.”

## **What services are not included in the exam?**

The exam does not include clinical laboratory tests.

## **How much does the beneficiary pay?**

Services included in the initial preventive physical exam are subject to the Medicare Part B

deductible (\$110 for 2005) and coinsurance payments (20%). There are several exceptions to the cost-sharing requirements.

- *Pneumococcal vaccine*: Beneficiaries are not required to pay any coinsurance amount or meet the annual Part B deductible.
- *Influenza vaccine*: If beneficiaries get the shot from a Medicare provider who accepts assignment, there is no charge. Otherwise, there may be a charge.
- *Screening mammography*: Beneficiaries are not required to meet the Part B deductible, but will have to pay a 20% coinsurance amount.
- *Screening pap test and pelvic exam with a clinical breast exam*: Beneficiaries are not required to meet the Part B deductible and do not pay for the pap lab test, but they do pay a 20% coinsurance amount for pap test collection, pelvic exam, and clinical breast exam.
- *Colorectal cancer screening*: Beneficiaries do not pay for the fecal occult blood test.
- *Prostate cancer screening*: Beneficiaries do not pay for the Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) blood test.

## **Need more information?**

Call the Virginia Insurance Counseling & Assistance Program (VICAP) for more information at **703-324-5851**.

*Source: Health Assistance Partnership, Washington, DC. Web site: [www.healthassistancepartnership.org](http://www.healthassistancepartnership.org).*

If you have questions about aging services in Fairfax County and the cities of Fairfax and Falls Church, call the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging at **703 -324-7948** (TTY 703-449-1186) to speak to an Aging Information Specialist. You also may visit the Web site at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/service/aaa](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/service/aaa).

## BETTY & DAVE NELBACH—VOLUNTEERS OF THE MONTH

*by Chris Williams, Volunteer Reporter*

Finding an interesting and rewarding volunteer activity after retiring was not difficult for Betty and Dave Nelbach of Springfield. They combined their love of dogs with a personal concern for individuals in nursing homes and are now one of the Fairfax Pets on Wheels (POW) successful pet therapy teams.

Betty and Dave are Washington, DC, area natives—Dave is from Alexandria, and Betty grew up in Washington. They both worked for the federal government and retired early. They live in the Springfield area and became interested in volunteering in 1989 because of a nursing home neglect situation that affected Betty's mom in southern Virginia. They heard about the POW program and knew that their toy poodle, Sandra, would be a natural for visiting nursing home residents. Sandra was a POW volunteer for 10 years, and won the first Shauna Award for Exceptional Performance as a pet therapist.

Besides taking Sandra to Leewood Nursing Home several times a week, Betty also became the POW liaison for Leewood. In the liaison role, she conducts orientation and training sessions for new POW volunteers and monitors the volunteer activities. Not to be outdone, Dave has contributed to the POW program and other Area on Agency programs by donating his computer skills. He designed the first computer tracking system and databases for the ElderLink, Ombudsman, and Volunteer programs.

After Sandra passed away in 1998, Dave and Betty acquired Shelby, a long-coated Chihuahua. Shelby has become both a successful POW volunteer and a television star on the Animal Planet network. He was featured in a segment on pet therapy and was filmed at Leewood Nursing Home with Betty. Shelby is full of personality and is easy to pet and hold. He loves sitting on the residents' laps, and they enjoy hugging him. Betty



**Dave, Betty, and Shelby Nelbach**

*(Photo by Chris Williams)*

says it is very rewarding to see the positive effect her dogs have had on the residents' daily lives.

It is easy to see how both Sandra and Shelby's pet therapy activities over the last 16 years have truly made a difference in the lives of many residents at Leewood Nursing Home. Betty makes an effort to visit all sections of the nursing home, including the Alzheimer's section, which can be difficult to do at times. Betty's most rewarding experience was when a comatose patient showed reaction when she visited with one of her dogs. The resident moved her hand and arm to touch the dog, which was one of the few times she showed such movement. Betty also knows that the Leewood residents look forward to seeing Shelby each week because they will ask about him if she is there without him. He truly is a star and we are glad that this family is part of the POW program.



# SENIOR CENTER HIGHLIGHTS



These programs are administered by the Department of Community & Recreation Services, with the exceptions of the City of Fairfax and the City of Falls Church senior centers and the Gum Springs Community Center. If participation accommodations are needed in accordance with the Americans With Disabilities Act, please call 703-324-5544 or TTY 703-222-9693 at least 10 working days in advance of the event. **All events are free unless otherwise noted.** The symbol RR means reservations are required. These are just a few of the activities offered. Call the center nearest you for a complete listing or if you have questions. **The Senior Centers will be closed January 17 and January 20.**

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<b><u>Bailey's</u></b> <b><u>Bailey's Community Center</u></b> <b>5920 Summers Lane</b> <b>Bailey's Crossroads, VA 22041</b> <b>Phone: 703-820-2131</b>	Wednesdays	11:00 a.m., Chair Aerobics With Mindy.
	Thursdays	11:00 a.m., New Book Club Meeting.
	Fridays	10:00 a.m., Shopping Trips.
	Mon. 1/3	12:30 p.m., <i>Night Leg Cramps</i> by Melissa McCallen.
	Wed. 1/5	1:00 p.m., <i>Fire Safety</i> by Fairfax County Fire & Rescue.

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**City of Fairfax**  
**4401 Sideburn Road**  
**Fairfax, VA 22030**  
**Phone: 703-359-2487**

**Call Center for Schedule.**

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<b><u>City of Falls Church</u></b> <b>223 Little Falls Street</b> <i>(Next to City Hall)</i> <b>Falls Church, VA 22046</b> <b>Phone: 703-248-5020/5021</b>  <b>Reservations are required for all trips, programs, and guest speakers.</b>	Tuesdays	10:00-11:30 a.m., Blood Pressure Screening (1st and 3rd Tuesdays of month)
	Mon. 1/10	12:30-2:30 p.m., Lunch Bunch to Chili's. \$1 Bus (leaves at 12:15 p.m.) + Lunch on Your Own.
	Thur. 1/13	10:15 a.m.-12:00 p.m., Roosevelt Island. \$1 Bus.
	Fri. 1/14	10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., <i>Arthritis Self-Management</i> by Susan Waters
	Fri. 1/21	10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Chinese New Year Celebration.
	Mon. 1/24	10:30 a.m.-1:45 p.m., Washington National Cathedral. \$5.
	Fri. 1/28	10:15 a.m.-12:45 p.m., Women in Military Service Memorial. \$1.

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<b><u>Franconia/Springfield</u></b> <b>Lane Elementary School</b> <b>7137 Beulah St.</b> <b>Alexandria, VA 22315</b> <b>Phone: 703-924-9762</b>	Mon. 1/3	10:30 a.m., Chair Jazzercise.
	Mon. 1/10	12:30 p.m., Relaxation for Arthritis.
	Tue. 1/18	12:00 p.m., Craft Class With Cindy.
	Tue. 1/18	12:30 p.m., Personal Plumbing: Constipation & Diarrhea.
	Wed. 1/19	10:00 a.m., Exercise Class With DeeJay.

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<b><u>Groveton at South County</u></b> <b>8350 Richmond Highway</b> <b>Ste. 325</b> <b>Alexandria, VA 22309</b> <b>Phone: 703-704-6216</b>	Tuesdays	10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Shopping Trips.
	Wednesdays	10:30 a.m., Bridge Club—Need New Players.
	Wednesdays	12:30-1:30 p.m., English as a Second Language (ESL) Class.
	Fridays	1:15 p.m., MADD Ribbons Community Project.

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# S E N I O R C E N T E R

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## **Gum Springs**

**Gum Springs Community Center**  
**8100 Fordson Road**  
**Alexandria, VA 22306**  
**Phone: 703-360-6088**

Mondays	10:00 a.m., Sewing and Quilting.
Tuesdays	10:30 a.m., Ceramics.
Wednesdays	10:30 a.m., Shopping/Bowling (Alexandria Bowling Center).
Thursdays	1:00 p.m., Bingo.
Fridays	10:00 a.m., Low-Impact Exercise.

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## **Hollin Hall**

**1500 Shenandoah Road**  
**Alexandria, VA 22308**  
**Phone: 703-765-4573**

Mondays	1/3, 24, & 31, 1:00 p.m., Salsa Lessons.
Fri. 1/7	10:00 a.m., Computer Club of Hollin Hall.
Mon. 1/10	1:00-3:00 p.m., Dancing With DeeJay Steve. (RR)
Tue. 1/11	2:00 p.m., Visiting Chef Marcelino From Sunrise of Mt. Vernon. Limited Seating. (RR)
Thur. 1/13	1:00 p.m., Backyard Birding With Carolyn. (RR)
Wed. 1/19	9:30 a.m., Mount Vernon American Antiques Arts Association Presents <i>Dolls—Old and New</i> .

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## **James Lee**

**James Lee Community Center**  
**2855 Annandale Road**  
**Falls Church, VA 22042**  
**Phone: 703-534-3387**

Mondays	10:30 a.m., Gentle Yoga.
Tuesdays	1:00 p.m., Bingo.
Wednesdays	1:00 p.m., Stretch for Flexibility Class.
Thursdays	11:30 a.m., Intergenerational Program.
Fridays	1:00 p.m., Ballroom Dancing Class.

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## **Lewinsville**

**1609 Great Falls Street**  
**McLean, VA 22101**  
**Phone: 703-442-9075**

Tue. 1/11	10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Trip to Camp Springs Senior Center in Fort Washington, MD. (RR)
Wed. 1/12	12:30 p.m., Reflections of 2004.
Thur. 1/13	10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., Hearing Test and Hearing Aid Fitting. (RR)
Tue. 1/25	10:30 a.m., Movie With the Preschoolers.
Mon. 1/31	12:00 p.m., January Birthday Party.

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## **Lincolnia**

**4710 North Chambliss St.**  
**Alexandria, VA 22312**  
**Phone: 703-914-0223**

Wed. 1/5	11:00 a.m., Consumer and Fraud Protection. (RR)
Tue. 1/11	10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m., Blood Pressure Screening—Walk-in.
Tue. 1/11	10:30 a.m., All About Elderhostel. (RR)
Tue. 1/25	11:00 a.m., African Safari Program. (RR)
Fri. 1/28	1:00 p.m., January Birthday Party With Entertainment.

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## **Little River Glen**

**4001 Barker Court**  
**Fairfax, VA 22032**  
**Phone: 703-503-8703**

Mon. 1/3	Throughout Entire Month—Warm Clothing Drive.
Wed. 1/12	1:00 p.m., Seminar— <i>Dealing With Holiday Let-Down</i> .
Thur. 1/13	1:00 p.m., Red Hat Society Chapter Meeting.
Wed. 1/19	1:00 p.m., Electro/Acoustic Harp Concert With Brian Stevenson.
Fri. 1/28	11:00 a.m., Scrapbook Creations With Patti. Bring Your Photos & Momentos.

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# HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED

**Lorton**  
**7722 Gunston Plaza**  
**Lorton, VA 22079**  
**Phone: 703-550-7195**

Thursdays	10:15 a.m., Free Exercise and Yoga With Gold's Gym Trainer.
Tue. 1/4	12:30 p.m., <i>Tips on Providing Your Family With a Will That Avoids Conflict</i> by Attorney K. Cossa. (RR)
Fri. 1/7	12:30 p.m., Pinochle Group, Double Deck, New and Experienced Players Welcome. (RR)
Thur. 1/13	12:30 p.m., January Birthday Celebration.
Tue 1/25	12:00 p.m., Pizza Day! Advisory Council Social. \$. (RR)

**Pimmit Hills**  
**7510 Lisle Avenue**  
**Falls Church, VA 22043**  
**Phone: 703-734-3338**

Fri. 1/7	10:30 a.m., Asian Food Shopping. \$1 Bus.
Mon. 1/10	11:00 a.m., Jazzercise Class.
Fri. 1/14	1:00 p.m., Line Dancing Class.
Wed. 1/19	1:00 p.m., Shuffleboard—Inside.
Wed. 1/26	10:30 a.m., Movie Classics.

**Reston-Herndon**  
**1850 Cameron Glen Drive**  
**Reston, VA 22091**  
**Phone: 703-481-4200**

Fri. 1/7	10:30 a.m., Trip to Sully Senior Center. \$1 Bus + Lunch Donation.
Tue. 1/11	10:00 a.m., Ceramics. 21 Sessions. Call for Details. (RR)
Wed. 1/19	11:00 a.m., Celebrate January Birthdays.
Mon. 1/24	12:30 p.m., Advisory Council Meeting. Everyone Welcome.
Thur. 2/3	11:00 a.m., Chinese New Year Party!

**Sully**  
**5690 Sully Road**  
**Centreville, VA 20124**  
**Phone: 703-322-4475/4479**

Fri.. 1/7	11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., New Year's Celebration With Reston. (RR)
Tue. 1/11	12:30 p.m., Computers Basic With Mike.
Wed. 1/19	10:00-11:00 a.m., Line Dancing.
Thur. 1/27	10:30 a.m., Stretch With Me & Yoga.

**Wakefield**  
**Audrey Moore RECenter**  
**8100 Braddock Road**  
**Annandale, VA 22003**  
**Phone: 703-321-3000**

Tue. 1/4	11:00 a.m., Trivia—Remember the Year. (RR)
Mon. 1/10	1:00-3:00 p.m., Computer Practice. (RR)
Wed. 1/19	11:30 a.m., <i>Fat-Soluble Vitamins</i> With Paul.
Fri. 1/21	1:30 p.m., Current Events Discussion.
Fri. 1/28	12:30 p.m., Birthday Celebration.

## Additional Locations for Meals/Other Activities

**David R. Pinn**  
**Community Center**  
**10225 Zion Drive**  
**Fairfax, VA 22032**  
**Phone: 703-250-9181**

**Huntington Community**  
**Center**  
**5751 Liberty Drive**  
**Alexandria, VA 22303**  
**Phone: 703-960-1917**

**If you prefer the *Golden Gazette* in large print, call 703-324-5633.**

## FREE HOME REPAIRS

Fairfax County's Home Repair for the Elderly Program provides free home repairs to homeowners who are 62 or older, and/or handicapped or disabled; and have a maximum income of \$40,250 for 1 person\*, or \$46,000 for 2 persons.\*

### Typical services include:

- Minor electrical repair
- Plumbing work
- Painting
- Repairing steps, floors, etc.
- Installing ramps and grab bars

**Fairfax County Residents - Apply now for FREE REPAIRS**

**Call 703-246-5154 TTY: 703-385-3578**

\* Other restrictions apply.



# Eye Health—Facts About Floaters

Floaters are little “cobwebs” or specks that float about in your field of vision. They are small, dark, shadowy shapes that can look like spots, thread-like strands, or squiggly lines. They move as your eyes move and seem to dart away when you try to look at them directly. They do not follow your eye movements precisely and usually drift when your eyes stop moving.

In most cases, floaters are part of the natural aging process and simply an annoyance. They can be distracting at first, but eventually tend to “settle” at the bottom of the eye, becoming less bothersome. They usually settle below the line of sight and do not go away completely. Most people have floaters and learn to ignore them; they are usually not noticed until they become numerous or more prominent. Floaters can become apparent when looking at something bright, such as white paper or a blue sky.

Floaters occur when the vitreous, a gel-like substance that fills about 80% of the eye and helps it maintain a round shape, slowly shrinks. As the vitreous shrinks, it becomes somewhat stringy, and the strands can cast tiny shadows on the retina. These are floaters.

Floaters are more likely to develop as we age and are more common in people who are very nearsighted, have diabetes, or who have had a cataract operation. There are other, more serious causes of floaters, including infection, inflammation (uveitis), hemorrhaging, retinal tears, and injury to the eye.

Sometimes a section of the vitreous pulls the fine fibers away from the retina all at once, rather than gradually, causing many new floaters to appear suddenly. This is called a vitreous detachment, which in most cases is not sight-threatening and requires no treatment. However, a sudden increase in floaters, possibly accompanied by light flashes or peripheral (side) vision loss, could indicate a retinal detachment. A retinal detachment occurs when any part of the retina, the eye’s light-sensitive tissue, is lifted or pulled from its normal position at the back wall of the eye. **A retinal detachment is a serious condition and should always be considered an emergency.** If left untreated, it can lead to permanent visual impairment within two or three days or even blindness in the eye. Those who experience a

sudden increase in floaters, flashes of light in peripheral vision, or a loss of peripheral vision should have an eye care professional examine their eyes as soon as possible.

For people who have floaters that are simply annoying, no treatment is recommended. On rare occasions, floaters can be so dense and numerous that they significantly affect vision. In these cases, a vitrectomy, a surgical procedure that removes floaters from the vitreous, may be needed. A vitrectomy removes the vitreous gel, along with its floating debris, from the eye. The vitreous is replaced with a salt solution. Because the vitreous is mostly water, you will not notice any change between the salt solution and the original vitreous. This operation carries significant risks to sight because of possible complications, which include retinal detachment, retinal tears, and cataract. Most eye surgeons are reluctant to recommend this surgery unless the floaters seriously interfere with vision.

*Source: National Eye Institute, Washington, DC.*

**The *Golden Gazette* is available both in the large-print format shown here (24-point font) and in recorded format.**

**To request, call the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging at 703-324-5633.**



## Homeownership Opportunity for Seniors

The Homeownership Branch of Fairfax County's Department of Housing and Community Development will have several opportunities for seniors to purchase affordably priced homes, some as early as January 2005. These one- and two-bedroom homes are located in adult-oriented condominium communities that are near a broad variety of amenities.

Because these are adult-oriented communities, the condominiums are available only to households with at least one member age 55 years or older and no household members age 19 or younger. Buyers also must be enrolled in the First-Time Homebuyers Program (FTHB).

Eligible buyers will be selected through a prioritized drawing. Priority will be given to residents living or working in Fairfax County. For accessible units, households with members who have a certified mobility impairment will receive first priority.

To learn more about these upcoming homeownership opportunities or to learn what four steps are necessary to apply to the First-Time Homebuyers Program, please contact the Homeownership Branch at **703-246-5087**, Monday-Friday, 1:00-4:00 p.m., or visit the Web site at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homebuyer](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homebuyer). First-Time Homebuyers orientation will be held at the Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, January 10 and February 16, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

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## Flu Shot Hotlines

For information on flu shots in the Fairfax area, please call:

- Fairfax County Health Department at **703-246-2411**
- Adult & Aging Intake, Information and Referral Services at **703-324-5404**



## Monthly Support Groups

\* The **Amputee Support Group of Northern Virginia** meets on the first Tuesday of every month, 7:30-9:00 p.m., at the Telestar Court Building, 2990 Telestar Ct., Gemini Room, Falls Church. Contact Irvin Axelrod at **703-222-7120** or [asgnva@earthlink.net](mailto:asgnva@earthlink.net).

\* The **Fibromyalgia/Arthritis Support Group** meets on the second Thursday of the month, 1:00 p.m., at Sherwood Library, 2101 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria. Call Barbara at **703-913-0890**.

\* The **Mended Hearts Support Group** meets on the first Wednesday of the month, 7:30-9:00 p.m., at the Telestar Court Building, 2990 Telestar Ct., Gemini Room, Falls Church. Contact John Braddon, **703-385-9694** or [jbraddon@cox.net](mailto:jbraddon@cox.net).

\* The **Neuropathy Organization of Northern Virginia** meets on the second Saturday of the month, 1:30-3:30 p.m., at 2990 Telestar Court, Falls Church. Call Mary Baldrige, **703-491-6690**, or Joanne Holman, **703-998-8143**.

\* The **Northern Virginia Post-Polio Support Group** meets on the second Saturday of each month, 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m., at the Mason Government Center, Annandale. Call **703-560-8852**.

\* The **Northern Virginia Support Group of the Well Spouse Foundation (WSF)** meets on the third Monday of the month, 7:00-9:00 p.m., in Supervisor Bulova's Conference Room, at the Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. The WSF supports spousal caregivers for the chronically ill or disabled. Call **703-425-2430**.

\* The **Parkinson's Disease Care Partners Support Group** meets on the third Wednesday of the month, 7:30 p.m., at Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Avenue, McLean. Call **703-891-0821**.

\* **Widow/Widower Support Groups** meet on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month, 7:30-9:00 p.m. Sponsored by Haven of Northern Virginia, 4606 Ravensworth Road, Annandale. Call **703-941-7000**.

## Model Training Program for Korean-Speaking Home Care Aides

In December 2004, at the Korean Senior Center, 31 Korean-speaking, locally-trained students graduated as home care aides. This event was the culmination of a unique community partnership to assist Korean-speaking seniors needing personal care assistance, and it provided training and employment opportunities to Korean-speaking students. The partnership includes:

- The Korean Central Presbyterian Church
- Fairfax Community Long-Term Care Coordinating Council
- Fairfax County Department of Family Services
- Northern Virginia Community College, Medical Education Campus
- Inova Health System, Congregational Health Partnership
- Northern Virginia Workforce Investment Board
- Virginia Commonwealth University
- Fairfax County's Faith Communities in Action.

The initial inspiration for the training program came from Heisung Lee, a professional nutritionist and member of the Korean Central Presbyterian Church in Vienna, who created and runs a highly successful senior center at the church. When Dr. Lee's own father was battling cancer and needed a trained personal care assistant (PCA) to help with his home care, she could find no one who spoke his language or understood his cultural background.

"If the aide doesn't speak the client's language or prepare the food that the client is accustomed to eating, the services provided may not be culturally sensitive or appropriate," Lee explained. "When my father needed round-the-clock care, the local hospice provided him with qualified personal care aides, but they were not able to fully meet his needs because of language and cultural barriers." So Lee brought the problem to her church congregation of over 4,000 members. "I learned that many in our community were interested in studying to become PCAs, but that their difficulty with English posed a barrier," Lee said.

Meanwhile, the county's Long-Term Care Coordinating Council (LTCCC) was looking for ways to increase the direct care workforce for its

rapidly growing population of older residents. In June 2004, the LTCCC and the Northern Virginia Workforce Investment Board (NVWIB) signed an agreement to work collaboratively with other partners, including Northern Virginia Community College, to explore and develop new models of best practice for recruitment, training, and retention of a direct care workforce for Northern Virginia.

Lee proposed an innovative approach for training personal care aides drawn from the Korean-American community—they would retain an English language curriculum and testing, but have bilingual instructors present the material to the students in Korean. Inova Health System and others realized that, if successful, this approach could be replicated in other language communities in the region.

Kyujung Park, the Korean coordinator for Inova Health System's Congregational Health Partnership, who is a bilingual registered nurse, worked with the Korean Senior Center to develop the program. Instructors who speak Korean present the course material, but students must pass the test in English to graduate.

Northern Virginia Community College (NVCC) provided lab space at its new Medical Education Campus (MEC) in Springfield. Ronda Hall, director of Continuing Education and Workforce Development at the MEC, worked closely with Lee and Park to support the training. The church provided classroom space and lunch, which the students shared twice a week with the senior center participants.

During the 15-week course, students learned the critical skills necessary to provide personal care for clients whose advanced age or disability requires the additional help so that they can continue to live at home.

The county's Faith Communities in Action group plans to work with the community partners that developed this model training program for home care aides to replicate the model in other local faith communities. The next class for Korean-speaking students, which begins March 2005, already has a waiting list.

## Social Security Benefits Increase 2.7% for 2005

Monthly Social Security and Supplemental Security Income benefits for more than 52 million Americans will increase 2.7% in 2005. Social Security and Supplemental Security Income benefits increase automatically each year based on the rise in the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W), from the third quarter of the prior year to the corresponding period of the current year. This year's increase in the CPI-W was 2.7%.

The 2.7% Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) will begin with benefits that more than 47 million Social Security beneficiaries receive in January 2005. Increased payments to 7 million Supplemental Security Income beneficiaries began December 30, 2004.

Some other changes that take effect in January of each year are based on the increase in average wages. Based on that increase, the maximum amount of earnings subject to the Social Security tax (taxable maximum) will increase from \$87,900 to \$90,000. Of the estimated 159 million workers who will pay Social Security taxes in 2005, about 9.9 million will pay higher taxes as a result of the increase in the taxable maximum in 2005.

It is important to note that no one's Social Security benefit will decrease as a result of the 2005 Medicare Part B premium increase, announced last month. By law, the Part B premium increase cannot be larger than a beneficiary's COLA increase.

For information about Medicare changes for 2005, **see the table in next column on this page** or visit the Department of Health and Human Services Web Site at: [www.hhs.gov](http://www.hhs.gov).

*Source: Social Security Administration. Toll-free 1-800-772-1213, TTY 1-800-325-0778. If you have a touch-tone phone, recorded information and services are available 24 hours/day, including weekends and holidays. The Web site is [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov).*

## 2005 MEDICARE RATES AND DEDUCTIBLES

	2005	2004
<b>Part A – Hospital Insurance</b>		
<b>Part A Premium:</b>		
Less than 30 Quarters	<b>\$375</b>	\$343
With 10% Penalty	<b>\$412.50</b>	\$377.30
30-39 Quarters	<b>\$206</b>	\$189
With 10% Penalty	<b>\$226.60</b>	\$207.90
Inpatient Hospital Deductible	<b>\$912</b>	\$876
Coinsurance:		
Days 61-90	<b>\$228</b>	\$219
Days 91-150	<b>\$456</b>	\$438
Skilled Nursing Copays:		
Day 21-100	<b>\$114</b>	\$109.50
<b>Part B – Medical Insurance</b>		
Part B, Base Premium	<b>\$78.20</b>	\$66.60
Annual Deductible	<b>\$110</b>	\$100

## Submitting Items for the Community Calendar

The Community Calendar page usually has space for about 9 or 10 items. We accept submissions from nonprofits only. The event should be open to the public. Generally, monthly meeting announcements are not of interest to the public, unless a special event is featured. We also cannot run your item every month if there are others vying for calendar space. We need to receive the materials by the first of the month, one month in advance. Your item must include:

1. Date
2. Time (start and end times)
3. Name of event
4. A very brief description
5. Address
6. Cost (if any)
7. Phone contact number.

There are three ways to submit your material:

1. **E-mail:** [rebecca.adams@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:rebecca.adams@fairfaxcounty.gov)
2. **FAX:** 703-449-8689
3. **Mail:** *Golden Gazette*  
12011 Government Center Pkwy, #708  
Fairfax, VA 22035-1104

## CAR SEAT SAFETY TIPS FOR GRANDPARENTS

By Virginia law, all children under the age of 6 must ride in a properly installed child restraint. Virginia law requires all children age 6 through age 15 to be properly secured in an approved child safety seat, booster seat, or safety belt no matter where the child is seated in the vehicle. Best practice, however, dictates that all children 12 and under should ride in the back seat.

As a grandparent, you may have the opportunity to transport your grandchildren in your car. Statistics say that, on average, 90% of the child safety seats inspected are not properly installed, are not appropriate for the type of vehicle they were installed in, are not appropriate for the child, or are defective in some way. Here are some tips about child safety seats and infants and young children:

- The safest place for children ages 12 and younger in a vehicle is in the back seat.
- If possible, obtain a *new* safety seat for your child.
- Never reuse a child safety seat that has been in a crash.
- Children should remain rear-facing for as long as possible, given the limitations of their child restraint.
- Infant seats usually accommodate children up to 20 pounds. *Infant seats are always installed rear-facing.* Never place an infant seat in front of an air bag.
- Most convertible seats may be used *rear facing* for children up to 30 pounds. Certain seats will accommodate children up to 35 pounds.
- Most convertible seats may be used *forward facing* for children 20-40 pounds. Certain seats will accommodate children up to 65 pounds, using a 5-point harness.
- Booster seats raise children so the lap/shoulder belt fits them properly.
- Most booster seats are intended for children 40-80 pounds. Certain booster seats will accommodate children up to 100 pounds.
- Children are not ready to use a regular adult seat belt until it fits them correctly. Seated upright, the child's knees should bend over the edge of the seat, the lap belt should ride low across the hips and the shoulder belt should cross the center of the chest.

There are many child safety seats on the market. Proper installation is essential to ensure the safety of your young passenger. Installation instructions vary depending on the model of car seat and the automobile in which it is installed. In the Fairfax area, some fire and police departments provide installation training as a public service. Here are some contacts:

■ **Arlington County.** Arlington County Fire Department Fire Station No.2, 4805 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington. By appointment only, Tuesday evenings. Call **703-228-BABY (2229)**.

■ **City of Alexandria.** *Alexandria CARES.* Call the Child Safety Seat Inspection Hotline at **703-924-9294** for a schedule of upcoming child safety seat inspection events.

■ **City of Fairfax (residents only).** The City of Fairfax Fire Department provides training sessions on the first Thursday of the month at 6:00 p.m. Registration is required. Call **703-246-6363**. The City of Fairfax Police Department offers safety checks and installation instruction, Mondays-Fridays, 2:00 p.m. For an appointment, call Officer Mitch Johnson at **703-279-7999**.

■ **Fairfax County.** *Operation Kids.* Call the Child Safety Seat Inspection Hotline at **703-280-0559** for a schedule of upcoming child safety seat inspection events. The following police stations provide assistance by appointment only.

1. Fair Oaks District Police Station, 12300 Lee-Jackson Memorial Highway, Fairfax. Call **703-591-0966**.

2. Franconia District Police Station, 6121 Franconia Road, Springfield. Call **703-922-0889**.

3. Mason District Police Station, 6507 Columbia Pike, Annandale. Call **703-256-8035**.

*Cont. p. 17*



4. McLean District Police Station, 1437 Balls Hill Road, McLean. Call **703-556-7750**.

5. Reston District Police Station, 12000 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Call **703-478-0904**.

6. West Springfield District Police Station, 6140 Rolling Road, Springfield. Call **703-644-7377**.

7. Mt. Vernon District Police Station, 2511 Parkers Lane, Mt. Vernon. Fourth Thursday of the month at 4:00 p.m. Call **703-360-8400**.

*Source:* Our thanks to Edward Clark, Life Safety Officer, City of Fairfax Fire Department, for this article. He may be contacted at 703-273-8109 or [eclark@fairfaxva.gov](mailto:eclark@fairfaxva.gov).

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## Winter Storms...Are You Ready?

Winter can limit your ability to travel. Ice storms can cause you to lose electric power. But getting ready for winter storms is not so difficult if you plan ahead. Here are some tips:

- ♦ Talk with your family, friends, and neighbors to prepare for emergencies.
- ♦ Fill your car's gas tank.
- ♦ Prepare a suitcase in case you have to go to a friend's house or a shelter.
- ♦ Have enough cash to pay for food, fuel, and medical care for several days. Make sure you have change for a pay phone (it's now 50 cents).
- ♦ Make a list of key phone numbers, including emergency numbers.

### If you lose electric power...

- ♦ Don't use open flames, charcoal grills or camp stoves indoors. Don't use your cooking stove for heat.
- ♦ Don't connect a generator directly to your electrical system. It can cause a fire.
- ♦ Be alert for friends or emergency personnel knocking at your door. You may need to go to a shelter.
- ♦ Check on your friends and neighbors to make sure they are okay, too.

*Source:* Virginia Department for the Aging.

## Winter Storm Checklist

(store enough of each item to last a week)

- ☐ Extra batteries for flashlights, hearing aids, or medical devices.
- ☐ Canned food or other nonperishable food
- ☐ Hand-operated can opener
- ☐ Battery-powered radio or TV
- ☐ Bottled water (one gallon/person/day)
- ☐ Prescription and nonprescription drugs
- ☐ Extra medical supplies, like oxygen, syringes
- ☐ Blankets and warm clothing, including hats and gloves
- ☐ Salt to melt ice on steps
- ☐ Extra glasses
- ☐ First aid kit
- ☐ Personal hygiene items such as soap and toothpaste.



*Source:* Virginia Department for the Aging.

## Inova's Free Health Classes

Inova's health seminars for January are shown below. The classes are free, but registration is required. Please call **703-204-3366** or go to [www.inova.org](http://www.inova.org) and click on "Health Info & Classes."

**Joint Community Class. Wednesday, January 19, 7:00 p.m.** The Inova Joint Replacement Center at Inova Mount Vernon Hospital will host a joint replacement class, taught by an orthopedic surgeon.

**Joint Replacement Class. Wednesday, January 26, 11:00 a.m.** An orthopedic specialist at Inova Fairfax Hospital will teach this class.



# COMMUNITY CALENDAR

**January 3.** 10:00 a.m. (refreshments at 9:30). Life of a Secret Service Agent in the Danger Zone by Jerry Parr. Lifetime Learning Institute's Monthly Forum. Northern Virginia Community College, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. **703-503-0600.**

**January 8.** 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Mature Operator's Driver Improvement Program. For Virginia residents 55 and older, this 8-hour class covers specific information for mature drivers. Upon completion, drivers are eligible for the Virginia State mandated insurance premium (amount determined by individual insurance carriers). Franconia District of the Fairfax County Police Department, 6121 Franconia Rd., Alexandria. \$10 for books/materials. Registration is required. Call **703-924-6588.**

**January 9.** 1:30 p.m. Media & Politics. George Mason University professor Richard Rubenstein moderates a panel discussion about the 2004 election coverage and America's culture war. Pohick Regional Public Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Rd., Burke. Call **703-644-7333.**

**January 14.** 1:00-2:30 p.m. Using Catalogs and the Internet to Find Cool Plants. Learn where to find interesting plants. Green Spring Gardens Park, 4603 Green Spring Rd., Alexandria. Registration required. \$9. **703-642-5173.**

**January 15 & 29.** 10:30 a.m. Computers Demystified. Having trouble finding files? Afraid to touch the keyboard? Think the Internet might be a good idea if you could figure it out? Register for this series of eight classes. Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Rd., Burke. **703-978-5600.**

**January 17.** 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Martin Luther King, Jr., Celebration. Features a coat and canned food drive. Reston Interfaith will distribute these donations throughout the winter season. The program itself will include a keynote address by Reston's founder, Robert E. Simon; entertainment; special exhibits; community information booths; youth activities, refreshments; and a birthday cake. South Lakes High School, 11400 South Lakes Dr., Reston. For more information, call Haywood Hopson, **703-390-6161.**

**January 19 & 29.** Beginning Knitting. Two Classes, Two Locations and Times.

**January 19.** 7:30 p.m. Fairfax High School, 3500 Old Lee Hwy, Fairfax. **703-503-6400.**

**January 29.** 10:00 a.m. Pimmit Hills Center, 7510 Lisle Ave., Falls Church. **703-506-2327.**

Conquer basic "knit and purl" and learn how to interpret different pattern stitches and knitting abbreviations. Bring size 8 needles and a skein of light-colored yarn. Registration required. \$115 for six 2-hour sessions.

## Libraries Offer Internet Tutoring

Most Fairfax County libraries have set aside appointment times for novices to receive personalized Internet tutoring or for the slightly proficient to become more proficient. Call your local library to set up a schedule.

Please note that since many of the instructors are volunteers, it is important that every effort is made to keep the appointment or provide sufficient notice if you cannot. Currently, Centreville Regional, Herndon Fortnightly, Patrick Henry, Sherwood Regional, and Thomas Jefferson are not active in this program. Here are the libraries that do participate:

### Chantilly

703-502-3883

### Dolley Madison

703-356-0770

### Fairfax City

703-293-6227

### George Mason

703-256-3800

### Great Falls

703-757-8560

### John Marshall

703-971-0010

### Kings Park

703-978-5600

### Kingstowne

703-339-4610

### Lorton

703-339-7385

### Martha Washington

703-768-6700

### Pohick

703-644-7333

### Reston

703-689-2700

### Richard Byrd

703-451-8055

### Tysons-Pimmit

703-790-8088

### Woodrow Wilson

703-820-8774